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ABSTRACT

This brochure examines basic information about pesticides and their use in and around schools, how children are exposed to pesticides and their health effects, and how a school can kick the habit of using pesticides. A special issues section covers the chemicals that should not be part of a school pest control effort, the restricted use of disinfectants, whether or not chemicals should be used to control head lice, issues involving active vs. inert ingredients in pesticides, and a cautionary note on pesticide product labeling. Final sections address the New York State laws concerning pesticides and provide a list of resources for more information and technical assistance. (GR)

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Healthy Schools Network, Inc.

Children, Learning, and Poisons Don't Mix: Kick the Pesticide Habit

1999

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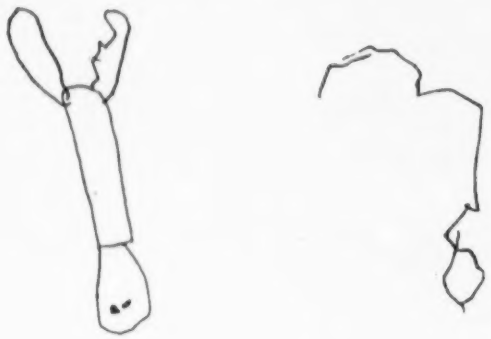
CHILDREN, LEARNNG, AND POISONS DON'T MIX: KICK THE PESTICIDE HABIT

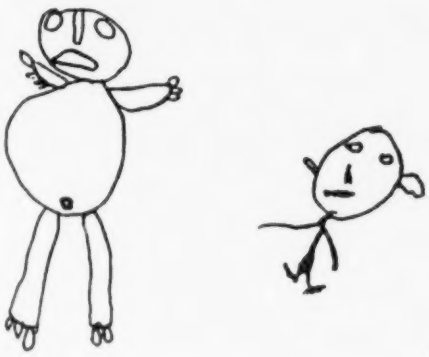
5 year olds with sustained pesticide exposures

Draw a person test



*5 year olds <u>without sustained exposures</u>**

Draw a person test



* More heavily pesticide-exposed children in this comparative study had decreases in stamina, gross and fine eye-hand coordination, 30-minute memory, the ability to draw a person, and increases in aggressiveness. (Guillette, et.al., *An Anthropological Approach to the Evaluation of Preschool Children Exposed to Pesticides in Mexico*, Environmental Health Perspectives, Vol. 106, No. 6, June, 1998). Drawings courtesy of Elizabeth Guillette. No pesticides have been tested for safety on children.

THE BASICS: PESTS AND PESTICIDES at SCHOOL

PESTS ARE animals or plants in the wrong place at the wrong time. Ants at a picnic are "pests", but they are part of the web of life; cockroaches are pests, head lice are pests; plants in a manicured lawn are called weeds, but they can also be wildflowers. Pests are also flies, spiders, mice, rats, termites, silverfish, poison ivy, molds, fungi, and bacteria and viruses. Like all plants and animals, "pests" need food, water, and a safe place to raise the next generation to survive. Pests that can't get food, water, or shelter are safely under control. <u>Pest infestations that are temporarily held back by pesticides are *out of control*</u>.

PESTICIDES ARE poisons designed to kill or repel insects (insecticides), rodents (rodenticides), weeds (herbicides), plant diseases (fungicides), and germs (disinfectants). They are routinely applied in and on all kinds of buildings and grounds, and in agriculture as sprays, fogs, pellets, powders, or put in bait traps. They may also be ingredients in shampoos (for head lice) and in cleaners (to kill germs). They do not stop pests from coming back, they kill or repel them temporarily and must be re-applied. Some pests have adapted to pesticides, becoming *mutant pest strains resistant to toxic chemicals.* <u>No one is required to use pesticides</u>.

PESTS AND PESTICIDES ARE IN SCHOOL BECAUSE schools provide food, water, and shelter to pests. Schools have holes in walls, roofs, or windows, or cracks in foundations and walls. Leaks, dripping plumbing, or dirty trash areas, along with food or crumbs left in lockers, cafeterias, classrooms, and plants and animals in classes all contribute. Playgrounds, athletic fields, school gardens, and yards are often treated, creating unnatural, expensive to maintain areas. School construction does not incorporate 'pest-proofing' techniques. <u>Minor building repairs and healthier practices are key to eliminating pests and pesticides</u>.

The routine use of toxic pesticides is a bad habit and a sign of inadequate administration, poor facility conditions, or outdated buildings and grounds management practices.

Healthy Schools Network, Inc.
www.hsnet.org
96 South Swan Street, Albany, NY 12210
518-462-0632

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HOW CHILDREN ARE EXPOSED TO PESTICIDES AT SCHOOL

Pesticides are freshly applied or misapplied while school is in session, in the evening, or on weekends. Pesticides leave residues; some residues hang in the air, settle on surfaces, and tend to collect more on plush toys, vinyl, and foam cushions and pillows, even two weeks after spraying (Gurunathan, et.al., Environmental Health Perspectives, Vol. 106, 1998). There are three exposure routes: 1) **Inhalation**: (children breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults) and can come in contact with pesticide vapors, fumes or dusts which are inhaled into the lungs and cause breathing problems or through absorption into the bloodstream which carries the chemicals to other body organs; 2) **Skin contact**: (children are less able to identify and avoid hazards and sit on the floor where pesticides have been applied) and may be exposed through absorption through the skin into the bloodstream. Some toys, and furniture or carpets, for example, can retain high levels of pesticide residues. (Lu & Fenske, Environmental Health Perspectives, Vol. 107, 1999); 3) **Ingestion**: Children play on the floor or ground, put their hands in their mouths, and rarely take the time to wash their hands before eating and can be exposed via hand to mouth activity or by accidentally eating a pesticide in a pellet or bait form. (Source for information on routes of exposure: N.J. Brown, MS, *Health Hazard Manual for Custodians, Janitors and Housekeepers*, Cornell Univ., 1990). Research also shows that the diets of young children expose them to much higher levels of pesticides than adults in juices, fruits, vegetables, and tap water. (Physicians for Social Responsibility, *Pesticides and Children: What the Pediatric Practitioner Should Know*, 1995).

EXPOSURES AT SCHOOL. Can be either acute (short-term, high level) or chronic (long-term, low level). These exposures can result in health effects such as dizziness, nausea, headaches, rashes, or flu symptoms, and in the long term may permanently damage body organ systems. If you suspect pesticide residues, vapors, or spills, leave the area immediately and get help. If you believe you/your child has pesticide poisoning, follow product label directions exactly. Get to the Emergency Room and/or call Poison Control. Have product label or exact name of product and its US Environmental Protection Agency registration number ready. Make sure the poisoning is reported to the NYS Dept. of Health Pesticide Poisoning Registry. *Call Healthy Schools Network for our Guide on What to Do if Your Child Has an Environmental Exposure at School.*

CHILDREN'S HEALTH vs. PESTICIDES

Children are not just little adults. They breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults do and they proportionally drink more water, and eat more. They also may not recognize or be able to avoid toxic exposures. They play or sit on or near the ground and engage in hand to mouth behaviors. They also have developing organ systems that cannot excrete or detoxify poisons as adults do. Moreover, toxic exposures in childhood can lead to a lifetime of health or learning problems. "Pesticides pose a risk for children.... Some pesticides can cause cancer, central nervous system damage, or respiratory illness. Each year more than 100,000 children accidentally ingest (eat) pesticides" (*US EPA, Environmental Health Threats to Children, 1996).* Exposures to pesticides have been linked to certain cancers in children, including leukemia, brain tumors, sarcomas, and lymphomas. Exposure also affects the nervous system, is linked to birth defects, and can alter the immune system and endocrine systems (Mott, et al., *Our Children at Risk, The 5 Worst Environmental Threats to Their Health*, NRDC, Nov., 1997). The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has also issued *Recognition and Management of Pesticide Poisoning* that recommends that physicians evaluating children always ask about use and storage of pesticides in homes, schools, and communities. It also cautions that in addition to the toxicity of pesticides, the antidotes are toxic, and other procedures such as intubation have risks (US EPA, fifth edition, March 1999). According to the New York State Attorney General's Office survey of school pesticide use (*Pesticides in Schools: Reducing the Use, Attorney General, New York State Department of Law, 1994 and subsequent editions*) the highly toxic chlorpyrifos, commonly used in schools, is linked to headaches, dizziness, loss of coordination, respiratory distress, cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, blurred vision, mental confusion, and muscular weakness. (See also, *Exposures from Indoor Spraying of Chlorpyrifos Pose Greater Risks to Children than Currently Estimated, D.L.Davis & A.K.Ahmed,* Environmental Health Perspectives, Vol. 106, No. 6, June, 1998).

SCHOOLS 'HOOKED' ON PESTICIDES: GETTING PAST THE DENIAL

The 1994 New York State Attorney General's survey estimated that 87% of the responding New York schools routinely use pesticides, including some of the most toxic pesticides on the market. However, few single pesticides have been studied in children and even fewer for their cumulative effects.

Like addicts sneaking a cigarette, nipping liquor, or denying drug abuse, school officials often offer excuses when challenged on their habits. To prevent the pesticide habit, federal, state and nonprofit groups have provided informational materials and workshops to educate school officials on healthier practices and products. In 1995 the Education Department sent a sample least-toxic pest control contract to all schools (based on the NYS Office of General Services contract) urging that they reduce pesticides (for a copy, call Healthy Schools Network). But bad habits, like addictions, are hard to break! Here are some of the excuses schools have used for their 'addiction', and here's how you can respond.

When school says...

"We're required to use pesticides."
"Parents want healthy looking grass."
"Pesticides kill weeds that trigger allergies"
"We need to fumigate for head lice."
"We need to kill the poison ivy."
"Natural kills are too expensive."
"We have an ant wasp emergency."
And the most popular...
"We didn't know we were using pesticides."

You say...

"No one is required to use pesticides."
"Parents want their kids to be healthy and learn."
"Pesticides affect immune system functioning."
"Lice live on people, not in hallway carpeting."
"Pesticides don't kill the plant oil that sets off the skin reaction."
"Routine pesticide use is a more costly means of maintenance"
"One ant/wasp is not an emergency; one precedes the swarm."
"See The Law."

SOME HEALTH EFFECTS OF VARIOUS PESTICIDES USED IN SCHOOLS*

Pesticide (Trade Name)	SampleTarget Pests	Potential Health Effects
Chlorpyrifos	Insecticide: ants, cockroaches, fleas, Termites, mosquitoes	Headaches, nausea, dizziness, abdominal cramps, persistent weight loss, vision problems, toxic psychosis, convulsions
MCPP (mecoprop)	Herbicide: broadleaf weeds; e.g. clover and dandelions	Skin irritation, vomiting, unconsciousness, coughing, dizziness, sensory and behavioral disturbances, spasms, sweating
Dicamba	Herbicide: broadleaf weeds	Skin irritation vomiting, unconsciousness, coughing, dizziness, sensory and behavioral disturbances, spasms, sweating
Bendiocarb (Ficam)	Insecticide: ants, fleas, silverfish, crickets, ticks, cockroaches	Diarrhea, muscle weakness, dizziness, headache, blurred vision, sensory and behavioral disturbances, spasms, sweating
Acephate (Orthene)	Insecticide: ants, cockroaches	Headache, flu-like symptoms, possible human carcinogen, reproductive effects, interferes with nerve impulse transmission
Cypermethrin (Demon)	Insecticide: ants, cockroaches	Allergic dermatitis, flu-like symptoms
2,4-D	Herbicide: broadleaf weeds	Vomiting, diarrhea, anorexia, ulcers of the mouth and pharynx, damage to the liver, kidneys, and central nervous system
Piperonyl butoxide	(Synergist included to enhance "active" ingredients)	May enhance toxic hazard of insecticides to humans, oncogen

* Table reprinted courtesy of the New York State Attorney General's Office.

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NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT POLICY

"Every child and school employee has a right to an environmentally safe and healthy school which is clean and in good repair; every child, parent, and school employee has a right to know about environmental health issues and hazards in their school environment; school officials and appropriate public agencies should be held accountable for environmentally safe and healthy school facilities; schools should serve as role models for environmentally responsible behavior; federal, state, local, and private sector entities should work together to ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently to address environmental health and safety conditions." Guiding Principles of School Environmental Quality," adopted, New York State Board of Regents, December 1994.

New York State Recommended Actions: "Schools should adopt and publicize pest management practices that prevent, reduce, or eliminate pesticide use. When pesticides are deemed essential, the less-toxic alternative shall be selected. Schools shall select pest management practices that minimize the exposure of individuals to pesticides. Schools shall post warning signs for all treated areas and leave them up for 48 hours. Schools shall provide prior notification to students, parents, and school personnel of intended pesticide applications. Schools shall have a certified pesticide applicator on-site supervising or performing pesticide applications. Schools shall provide integrated pest management (IPM) training to appropriate custodial and maintenance personnel on an annual basis. Schools shall maintain and make available to parents and school personnel, records of all pesticide applications, including the pesticide applied, date of application, and location(s) treated."

Action Taken: The Education Department issued a least-toxic pest management memorandum to all schools in the state in August 1995, attaching a copy of the NYS Office of General Services IPM (Integrated Pest Management) sample contract and list of contractors with IPM skills. Schools are encouraged to use state contracts for local purchasing goods or services.
Actions in other states: As of Summer 1999, least 30 states have some form of restriction on pesticide use in schools, but not New York. Four states currently require schools to practice "least-toxic" pest management, others have bans on sprays; other states, like New York, have had restrictive pesticide legislation

Least-toxic Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

is a method of buildings and grounds maintenance that, first, seals pests out of buildings or discourages or blocks their using your food, water, and shelter. It promotes natural landscaping. Sticky traps are often used to find the exact kinds of pests in a building. If pests can't be sealed out or kept under control, then, the second step is using the least-poisonous pesticide available. The end results of a "least toxic" program (like that used by the federal government or New York State for federal and state offices: see resources) are an elimination of the most poisonous products, and a phase out of the rest. It also results in cost savings due to permanent building improvements, and lower risks. New York State Board of Regents has adopted a nontoxic pest management policy that now governs the Education Department (see Diploma graphic above).
Ask your school board to adopt the state policy as its own. If school tells you it does 'IPM', check the claim by using the checklist below, by talking to personnel, or by asking to see the records of the time/place/name of each pesticide applied at school.

CHECKLIST: Signs of a Least-toxic Pest Management Program

- ✓ Custodians and cleaners carry caulk guns and screen patching (or have these items readily available)
- ✓ Sticky traps are set and checked regularly by school personnel
- ✓ Screening is used in windows, for indoor food storage areas, and for outdoor trash centers
- ✓ No pets are in classrooms
- ✓ Food is stored and eaten only in certain limited areas; no snacks in classrooms
- ✓ Grass and shrubs are planted and trimmed to stay away from the building. The building foundation, fence lines, and the sides of drives and walks are not edged with telltale brown grass that follows herbicide applications.
- ✓ When asked, school immediately shows you where maintenance chemicals are stored and can show you product labels from all pesticides in use
- ✓ School has written ban on the use of pesticides that cause cancer and other serious disorders
- ✓ School uses only those pesticide applicators who are certified and over 21 years old
- ✓ School notifies parents and personnel in advance of pesticide applications and posts treated areas
- ✓ School board has an annual report on the pest management program, including products and amounts used
- ✓ School board has adopted a district "least-toxic" pest management policy (like the State Education Department policy) that fixes the building first, then minimizes or eliminates the use of toxic chemicals, and provides prior notification of pesticide use
- ✓ School has designated an employee for pest control questions/complaints
- ✓ Facility Director or Business Official keeps a list of pest management resources and training schedules. School has a monitoring program that continually identifies pests and promotes nontoxic strategies

MIX: KICK THE PESTICIDE HABIT AT SCHOOL

GETTING SCHOOL TO KICK THE PESTICIDE HABIT

Get the facts—Step 1: Ask your school board, school superintendent, school principal, or school facility director about the current pest management practices in the district or building. Check the answer by asking adults in the building (teachers, support staff, or custodial staff) when and where pesticides are applied. What school officials believe to be true is not always what happens in actual practice.

Get the facts—Step 2: Ask your school facility director (or head custodian) to show you the regular maintenance and repairs that keep pests out of the building, or off the athletic field. *See 'Checklist' on facing page.*

If you verify that school has an informal "least- toxic" or nontoxic pest management program that uses natural barriers and other prevention steps, and a stated method of finding the least toxic pesticide to use, (and can prove it), **say thank you**. Then call us. We are looking for schools that can show others how to do it right.

NEVER TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER

What can you do if school refuses to answer your questions or continues to use toxic pesticides? Some parents and communities have successfully overturned that kind of negative thinking. So can YOU.

- **Walk the talk: do it yourself**. Part of asking school to do a better job is knowing how to do it better yourself. If you still use pesticides at home, stop.
- **Work with the facts**. Check the local board of education policy manual, and request a school tour. Speak with adults in the building.
- **Never work alone.** Pesticides are a problem for lots of people. If you appear to be acting alone or are an 'outsider' to the school community, school officials are apt to ignore you. If you are an 'insider', they may resent your interference and harass you or your child. Find one or two other parents, community members/taxpayers, school personnel, or students who agree with you and who will help. Look at the starter list of groups in this Guide that want pesticides out of schools and ask their local members if they will help.
- **Find a group or create a group**. If the local PTA (or other school-based group) is too busy to help, make up your own group (examples: Friends for A Healthier School, or Parents for a Pesticide-Free School). Use the group name/letterhead whenever you call or write to school. Make sure everyone in your new group (even if it's just 2-3 others at first) agrees on what to say and when to say it. Keep copies of everything.

What your group can do:

- **Establish a track record.** Ask to tour school with the facility director; go with another group member or friend. Ask to see the pesticide application records; if refused, ask for the District's board-appointed Right to Know or Freedom of Information Act designees, or call Healthy Schools for help.
- **Offer to speak to the school board** or accept the offer to speak and present information.
- **Put your request for eliminating pesticides in writing**. Attach information about pesticide hazards. Always ask for a response in writing. If you are invited to meet with a school official, go with another group member. Take notes and follow up in writing. If two or three people will speak in support, then ask the school board (whom you elect), to hold a public meeting on school pesticide use.
- **Suggest your school officials call the Healthy Schools Network, the State Education Department, or the State Office of General Services for advice on how to get started.** We can put your school officials in touch with others in and out of New York State who are kicking the pesticide habit and controlling pests.
- **Keep your cool and help others keep theirs.** Don't panic over head lice, but get angry about proposed fumigation. Be prepared for harassment; let your group respond to all communications.
- **Get public attention.** Create a news item for the local press talking about pesticide hazards and giving the names of products your school uses. Circulate a petition asking school to stop its use of toxic pesticides. Present the petition at a board meeting, or run it as letter to the editor in the local paper.
- **Help school do a better job.** Actively support and help enforce rules to keep recycling areas clean, or to confine food and snacks to one area of the school. Set up a no-nit program. Be realistic in your buildings and grounds expectations; nontoxic pest control requires the cooperation of building occupants and preventive maintenance. Find out what kind of staffing or resources (if any) are needed to improve school environmental conditions generally.
- **Ask school for a new policy to protect kids from pesticides.** Some schools are carrying out a pesticide reduction/elimination program, but it isn't in writing anywhere. That's fine, but what happens when the interested board member, school superintendent, or facility director retires or moves away? The best way keep a good program in place is to have the local board of education receive regular reports at board meetings and to adopt the program as local policy. School boards adopt policies throughout the year on a wide variety of topics to establish how they will operate and who is responsible. Look at your board policy manual (usually maintained in the District office); then ask the board (in writing of course) to adopt its program as a local policy. Some schools have adopted the Education Department's policies for environmental quality (see Diploma graphic).
- **Caution: school committees**. Some work well; others don't. Just because a committee is established don't stop your group's activities. Feed information to friends on the committee; go to all the committee meetings. Keep an eye on your goal: get school to kick the pesticide habit.

SPECIAL ISSUES

WARNING: FAKE IPM: some pest control companies and services sell their programs as 'IPM' or Integrated Pest Management, but they continue to apply very toxic products. For example, the Cooperative Extensions's Urban IPM program literature allows for the use of highly toxic pesticides.

REAL IPM: to protect yourself and your children from toxics, ban or phase out the most dangerous products and use our checklist to help school kick the pesticide habit FOR REAL.

BAN THE WORST

While **no pesticide is safe**, some are worse than others. Chemicals that are known to cause cancer (carcinogens, for example, arsenic acid anhydride, chromic acid), probable carcinogens (alachlor, captan, chlorothalonil, manel, mancozeb), acutely toxic chemicals (methyl bromide, azinphosmethyl, methyl parathion, terbufos), or chemicals that disrupt endocrine systems (endosulfan, atrazine), neurotoxic products such as organophosphate pesticides (example, chlorpyrifos), or developmental toxins (warfarin, vinclozolin) should be eliminated from children's learning environments.

Disinfectants: Rarely Needed.

Schools are not required to disinfect surfaces except those in direct contact with food being prepared. Specific disinfecting is required when blood-borne pathogens are suspected. **Most disinfectants are toxic pesticides designed to kill bacteria or viruses**. Frequently touched surfaces such as faucets, hand rails, walls, toilets, can harbor these germs but are not considered primary sources of infection. Federal Center for Disease Control (CDC) says, "Physical removal of organisms by scrubbing, that is, using 'elbow grease' is thought to be more important than any antimicrobial effect of the cleaning agent used." (*Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Nosocomial Infections*, Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA, 1983). See Resources list for information about healthier cleaning supplies.

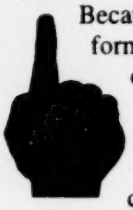
Head Lice: A Common Problem

With the exception of the common cold, head lice affect more school-age children than all other communicable diseases combined. Head lice are transmitted by direct contact with an infested person, or by the sharing of brushes, combs, hats, scarves, coats, towels, bedding, rugs/carpet, or upholstered furniture. However, buildings don't catch head lice, people do. Lice die off in 24 to 48 hours without a human host. While it is essential to remove all head lice and nits from the hair, it is unnecessary to use highly toxic chemicals to do so. (*Safe Control of Head Lice*, New York Coalition Against Pesticides, NYCAP, 1997). For help creating or enforcing a 'no nit' policy at school or other methods to treat head lice safely and effectively, see the Resources section.

"Active" vs. "Inert" Ingredients in Pesticides. An **active** ingredient is chemical specifically intended to kill or repel a target pest. **Inert** ingredients are all others, such as emulsifiers, solvents, preservatives, and anti-volatility agents. Inerts are added to help with spreading, spraying, coating, or to supplement the effectiveness of the active ingredients. **Beware:** inerts do not need to named on a pesticide label, even though they may be extremely toxic. Of the 2500 chemicals used as inert ingredients, 209 are classified as hazards air and water pollutants, 14 are classified as extremely hazardous, 21 are classified as known or suspected carcinogens, and 127 are regulated as occupational hazards. Even worse, 394 "inert" ingredients are active ingredients in other pesticide products, including 11 that are considered restricted pesticides. (Northwest Coaltion for Alternatives to Pesticides, *Worst Kept Secrets: Toxic Inert Ingredients in Pesticides*, 1998.) Not even applicators may know some of the inert ingredients.

The "safety" lie. Federal and state laws require pesticides to be registered, be labeled, and to be used according to directions. **This doesn't make them safe. Most pesticides are hazardous to humans and the environment even when used properly; many insecticides are neurotoxic.** In addition, many pesticides are designed to "persist", lingering in room air or on grounds for days, or even weeks after treatment. If a school application occurs on Sunday, you or your child are still potentially exposed on Monday morning. **Pesticides are poisons that are not safe, and do not "go away" after application.**

THE LAW



Because the pesticide manufacturers, formulators, distributors, and applicators can direct more money than kids can, no federal or New York State laws have been passed requiring schools, day care centers, or youth homes or centers to reduce or phase out pesticides. And, no pesticides have been tested for safety on kids. Instead, regulations governing general pesticide sales and use are in effect. Only a few states now require schools to use least-toxic IPM programs.

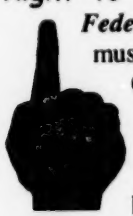
Federal Law: The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) says:

- All pesticides must be registered with the US Environmental Protection Agency for sale and use;
- All pesticide containers or other device used for application must be labeled. The label must be prominently placed in such a way that it is likely to be read and understood. It must contain: the pesticide registration number and use classification, a list of "active" ingredients (see 'Special Issues'), directions for use, methods for application, a description of where application can or cannot be made, warning or caution statement, precautions and treatment for poisoning, whether or not personal protective equipment is needed for application, ventilation requirements, protections of food, pets, etc., period of time for reentry after application, potential environmental hazards (including prohibitions against contamination of water, non-target vegetation and wildlife), and storage and disposal requirements.
- Pesticides must be used in accordance with the label.
- A pesticide is "misbranded" if its labeling contains any "false or misleading" statements, such as "safe" or "harmless" or "nontoxic to humans and pets" with or without a qualifying phrase such as "when used as directed") and prohibits any person to sell or distribute any registered pesticide that makes any claim that "substantially differs" from claims made as part of the product registration. In other words: **It is against the law to say that a pesticide is safe.**

New York State Law:

- All pesticides must be registered with both federal and state agencies.
- Commercial/restricted use pesticide applicators must be certified and hold a valid certification card;
- A copy of the label of each pesticide must be available at the facility where it is being used and must be accessible to anyone who asks for it.
- If a contractor is maintaining the grounds the contract with the school must list which active ingredients (chemicals) are being used, and describe any warnings on the labels that are pertinent to the protection of humans, wildlife or the environment;
- Contractors must place markers within or along the perimeter of the area where pesticides will be applied visibly post on the grounds four-by five-inch signs for a 24 hour period after application warning that pesticides were used;
- School employees do not have to post signs unless the grounds on which pesticides have been applied are within a park or within 100 feet of any building.

Right-to-Know Information on Pesticide Use in Schools



Federal and State Law. School districts must be in compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) and New York State Right to Know law concerning hazardous substances. Districts must set up and keep a hazard communication program about hazardous substances. Under HCS, all containers containing hazardous substances must be labeled to identify their contents and provide a warning of any hazards associated with their use. HCS also requires that Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) are maintained on site and available to all employees. MSDSs include information on product health effects, safe use, handling, storage, and emergency procedures. School districts must make a list of all hazardous chemicals and document employee training in hazardous materials management. Parents are entitled to a wide range of information on health and safety at school. If school is not complying with HCS or has refused your request for information, call Healthy Schools Network for a copy of our Factsheet on Right-to-Know. Employees may also call their union or the NYS Department of Labor.

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT PESTICIDES

United Parents Association of New York City: "Pesticides do serious damage to our children. We support least toxic IPM practices. DO YOU?"
New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers (State PTA): "(PTA) supports IPM, urging "the use of pesticides only as last resort and the promotion of alternative pest control methods in order to protect children's health, safety, and environment, " And urges, "the Education Department and the Legislature to establish specific guidelines to protect school children from unneeded exposure."
New York State Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds Association: "There are tasks that can be completed using poison. Those same tasks can be completed more effectively without poison. This is a proven fact. It's a no-brainer."
National Education Association of New York: "All schools should be required to practice IPM and to provide parents and employees with full disclosure regarding the application of pesticides."
Civil Service Employees Association: "CSEA strongly supports integrated pest management in schools. Children and toxic pesticides are an unhealthy mix."
New York City School Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council: "The health of students is paramount and students and teachers should have no less protection than the American workforce. It is scandalous that schools are less carefully regulated than any other American workplace."
Community Advocates for Educational Excellence: "Community Advocates takes a firm position with respect to pesticides and pest control and feels that policies should be environmentally friendly and safe for children and those employed by schools."
Mid-State AFL-CIO: "The use as well as misuse of pesticides in schools affects both children and staff. The best protection against the risk of pesticide poisoning is to stop using pesticides altogether. This is the approach taken by integrated pest management practices."
New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health: "Eliminating the use of pesticides in schools and other facilities is the most effective method of reducing the exposure to children, school personnel, and other workers to extremely dangerous toxic substances."
American Lung Association of New York State: "We strongly endorse least-toxic pest management for all schools. There is no place for pesticides in settings with young, growing lungs."
New York State Attorney General: "Schools should adopt least toxic pest management policies and practices in order to reduce or eliminate pesticide use, and should select the least toxic pesticides in situations where pesticide use is deemed essential."
Advocates for Children of New York City: "So many pesticides are so dangerous for growing children that we support reducing or eliminating these toxic products."
New York State United Teachers: " We support minimizing risks posed by pesticide use. Schools should adopt least toxic pest management policies and practices… Schools should be required to notify children, parents, and teachers of upcoming pesticide applications."
US Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner: "As a mother I understand that importance of a healthy school environment…. As an environmentalist, I understand the need to eliminate the unnecessary use of any toxic chemical. As EPA's Administrator, I encourage all schools to reduce the use of pesticides…."
New York State Association of School Nurses: " We support least-toxic pest management policies and programs at school as a way to promote healthier children."
American Public Health Association: (Public Policy Statement on the Management of Pesticides: " Emphasis should be placed on minimizing the use of broad spectrum persistent chemicals which are most likely to produce a multiplicity of undesirable side effects, and on maximizing the use of sanitation measures, biological controls, selective methods of application, and more selective and nonpersistent chemicals."
American Cancer Society: "Children are particularly susceptible to negative health effects due to long exposures to toxic substances…(IPM) is one method of reducing the risks…by children to potentially harmful substances."

RESOURCES: Where to go for more information and technical assistance.

Organizations.
Healthy Schools Network, Inc.'s Information and Referral Clearinghouse, 96 South Swan Street, Albany, NY 12210. www.hsnet.org, or 518-462-0632 for user-friendly guides, factsheets, packets, and posters on a wide range of child health and other school environmental issues.
Or, get in touch with one of the following organizations for information and assistance on reducing/eliminating pesticides in homes, schools, or communities.

- The New York Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides (NYCAP), 353 Hamilton Street, Albany, NY 12210, 518-426-8246. www.crisny.org/not-for-profit/nycap/nycap.htm
- The National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides, 701 E Street, Ste. 200, Washington, DC 20003, 1-202-543-5450. www.ncamp.org.
- Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, PO Box 1393, Eugene, Oregon, 97440. 1-800- 490-9198.
- United States Environmental Agency, Office of Pesticide Programs, *Pest Control in the School Environment: Adopting Integrated Pest Management*, (EPA 735-F-93-012), August 1993.
- United States Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances, *Recognition and Management of Pesticide Poisonings*, (EPA 735-R-98-003), March 1999. Available electronically at www.epa.gov/pesticides/safety/healthcare.
- New York State Department of Law, Office of the Attorney General (AG), Environmental Protection Bureau, *Pesticides in Schools: Reducing the Risks*, 1994. This and other pesticide literature can be found at www.oag.state.ny.us, or call the Attorney General's Information & Complaint Line 1-800-771-7755.
- Environmental Advocates (EA), New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), *Plagued by Pesticides, An Analysis of New York State's 1997 Pesticide Use and Sales Data*, 1998. EA (518) 462-5526 or NYPIRG (518) 436-0876.

The "IPM in Schools" Website. US Environmental Protection Agency and National Integrated Pest Management Network has developed a web site on "IPM in Schools" which includes a wide array of information on promoting least toxic pest management in schools for parents, administrators, facility directors.www.gnv2.ifas.ufl.edu/ ~schoolipm/

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